

Message Text

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44

ACTION SS-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, SA, JO, US, UR
SUBJECT: ANOTHER ARTICLE ON JORDAN AIR DEFENSE

REF JIDDA 2962

1. BELOW IS THE TEXT OF AN ARTICLE DATELINED "AP AMMAN"
ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER "ARAB NEWS," APRIL 26. NO
SAUDI NEWSPAPERS CARRIED ARTICLE TODAY.

2. BEGIN TEXT. U.S. CUTS HAWK MISSILE PRICE. (HEADLINE)
THE UNITED STATES HAS REDUCED THE PRICE OF HAWK MISSILE
SYSTEM FROM \$800 MILLION TO \$500 MILLION TO KEEP JORDAN
FROM GOING TO THE SOVIT UNION FOR AN ANTI-AIRCRAFT
SYSTEM, OFFICIALS HERE SAID SUNDAY.

THE JORDAN GOVERNMENT, THEY SAID, IS IN TOUCH WITH
THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA TO STUDY THE NEW OFFER.

SAUDI ARABIA HAD BASICALLY AGREED TO PAY \$450 MILLION
FOR A HAWK SYSTEM FOR JORDAN. NO INFORMATION WAS GIVEN
ON HOW THE PRICE CAME TO BE REDUCED.

U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD RUMSFELD,
WHEN ASKED SUNDAY ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE HAWK SALE,
SAID TALKS WITH THE JORDANIANS WERE CONTINUING BUT HE
DECLINED TO SPECULATE ON THIER OUTCOME.

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LAST WEEK IT WAS REPORTED THAT JORDAN AND THE SOVIET UNION WOULD EXCHANGE MILITARY DELEGATIONS WHICH WOULD STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING JORDAN WITH A RUSSIAN-MADE ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILE SYSTEM.

CROWN PRINCE HASSAN OF JORDAN IS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE FOR SAUDI ARBIA MONDAY. THE MISSILE QUESTION IS EXPECTED TO ARISE DURING HIS TRIP OFFICIALS SAID. END TEXT.

3. ABOVE IS SECOND ARTICLE IN TWO DAYS SPECULATING ON SAUDI FINANCING OF HAWK. THIS ARTICLE QUOTES JORDANIAN OFFICIALS AS SOURCE OF INFORMATION. IMPACT OF ARTICLE CAN ONLY SERVE TO COMPLICATE A POSITIVE SAUDI RESPONSE TO OUR RECENT DEMARCHE AND STIFFEN SUCH SAUDI RESISTENCE AS EXISTS AGAINST INCREASED FINANCING. WE ARE MOST INTERESTED IN KNOWING SOURCE OF ABOVE ARTICLE AND HOPE THAT JORDANIAN OFFICIALS INVOLVED MAY EXERCISE MORE RESTRAINT UNTIL SAG RESPONSE IS FORTHCOMING.
PORTER

SECRET

NNN

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